

REMARKS

In Official Action dated February 24, 2005, the Examiner rejected the pending claims as obvious or anticipated by Muellenberg 5,067,847 along or in combination with Geib 6,361,243 and Stegeman 5,308,183. Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection in light of the following discussions.

Drawing Objection

Applicant's undersigned attorney has reviewed Fig. 2 in attempt to understand the Examiner's objection to the chamfer illustrated in Fig. 2. The chamfer is drawn correctly. The Examiner indicates that he marked-up Fig. 2, however, it appears that the Examiner simply circled two portions and indicated that one portion is correct and the other is not. However, both portion are correct. If the Examiner continues the drawing objection, Applicant's undersigned attorney requests that the Examiner specify exactly why he believes the drawing is incorrect.

Specification Objection

The Examiner objected to the specification as not providing antecedent basis for the terms "first connector", "second connector" and circumferential interlock. These features of the claims are clearly illustrated and described in the application. In addition, the MPEP clearly states that there is no need for a word for word correspondence between the terms used in the claims and the terms used in the specification. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider the objection to the specification.

Claim Objections

Although Applicant believes that the claims are clear and definite, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 9 to clarify some of the issues raised in the Examiner's objection. The amendments are not made for any reason relating to patentability.

§112 Issues

The Examiner believes that claim 7 is unclear whether the plurality of slots is identical to the slot recited in claim 1. However, claim 7 is clear and definite. Claim 1 recites at least one slot. Claim 7 recites a plurality of slots. Both claims would cover a device having two or more slots, however, only claim 1 would literally cover a device having a single slot. Claim 7 would not literally cover a device having a single slot. Applicant does not see how this is unclear.

§102 and 103 rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-8 as obvious over Muellenberg in light of Geib. Specifically, the Examiner contends that Muellenberg teaches all of the elements of claim 1 except that Muellenberg does not teach that the outer surface of the outer sleeve is tapered. The Examiner indicates that Geib teaches an outer sleeve having a tapered surface.

However, the Examiner has not addressed several features in claim 1 that are neither taught nor suggested by Muellenberg. For instance, claim 1 recites that rotating the nut in a first direction operates to tighten the device, and rotating the nut in a second direction operates to loosen the nut. In contrast, Muellenberg requires a plurality of screws to be driven through the nut to loosen the device. See col. 5 lines 1-10. This cumbersome loosening feature is quite different from Applicant's device.

Claim 1 also recites that the nut has a first connector and the outer sleeve includes a second connector cooperable with the first connector to connect the outer sleeve to the nut to impede substantial axial displacement of the outer sleeve relative to the nut. The Examiner has identified flange 16 as the first connector and element 13 as the second connector. However, these two elements do not impede substantial axial displacement of the outer sleeve relative to the nut. Instead, the outer sleeve can be readily displaced rearwardly relative to the nut so that the outer sleeve can be easily

detached from the outer sleeve, which leads to lost pieces when the unit is not mounted onto a machine element. In addition, since there is no connection between the nut and the outer sleeve, the device cannot be loosened by turning the nut in the opposite direction. Instead, the device requires the use of a plurality of withdrawal screws as discussed above.

Further still claim 1 recites that rotating the nut in a first direction displaces the inner sleeve forward which displaces the major diameter of the external surface of the inner sleeve toward the minor diameter of the outer sleeve internal surface to contract the inner sleeve against the shaft. In contrast, the Muellenberg device works completely opposite.

Muellenberg teaches that the device operates such that "the outer taper ring 20 is pulled to the left onto the inner taper ring by tightening the screw ring 30". See col. 4 lines 57-59. Nothing in Muellenberg teaches or suggests altering the Muellenberg device to operate as the device recited in claim 1. Further, dependent claims 2-8 are patentably distinct from Muellenberg, alone or in combination with the cited references, for at least the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection of claims 1-8.

The Examiner rejected claims 9,10, and 13 -18 as anticipated by Muellenberg 5,056,847. However, the device in Muellenberg does not have several of the features recited in claim 9.

For instance, claim 9 recites a one-piece inner sleeve for encircling the shaft. There is no teaching in Muellenberg that the inner sleeve is a one-piece sleeve.

Claim 9 also recites that the outer sleeve has a circumferential interlock engaging the flange of the nut. Again, Muellenberg does not teach or suggest a

circumferential interlock.

Further still claim 9 recites that upon rotation of the nut, the threads of the nut engage the threads of the inner sleeve . . . thereby displacing the major diameter of the inner sleeve external surface toward the minor diameter of the outer sleeve internal surface [to contract the inner sleeve against the shaft]. As discussed above, the Muellenberg device operates in the exact opposite manner. More specifically, Muellenberg teaches that the device operates such that "the outer taper ring 20 is pulled to the left onto the inner taper ring by tightening the screw ring 30". See col. 4 lines 57-59. Nothing in Muellenberg teaches or suggests altering the Muellenberg device to operate as the device recited in claim 9.

Similarly, claim 15 recites connecting the outer sleeve to the nut to impede substantial axial displacement of the outer sleeve to the nut. As discussed above, Muellenberg does not teach or suggest such a features.

Claim 15 teaches rotating the nut in a forward direction to drive the inner sleeve forwardly to connect the inner sleeve to the shaft. Again, as discussed above, Muellenberg operates in the opposite manner, by pulling the outer sleeve to the left to tighten the inner sleeve. Similarly, claim 15 recites that rotating the nut in a reverse direction drives the inner sleeve rearwardly to release the outer sleeve, whereas, Muellenberg works in the opposite manner.


In light of the foregoing difference between claim 15 and Muellenberg, claim 15 is patentably distinct from Muellenberg, along with dependent claims 16-18.

In light of the foregoing discussion, Applicant requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection of claims 1-18 and favorably consider newly presented dependent claims 19-20, which are patentable over the prior art for atleast the reasons

stated above in connection with claims 1 and 9. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney if the Examiner believes that issues remain regarding the allowability of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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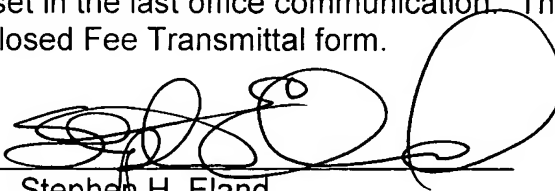
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Petition for Extension Under 37 CFR §1.136(a)

Applicant's undersigned Attorney hereby petitions for an extension of time of **TWO** months beyond the time period set in the last office communication. The proper fee is enclosed as identified in the enclosed Fee Transmittal form.

July 25, 2005
Date of Certificate


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